New Smoke Alarm Legislation

Glossary of Terms

- **Dwellings**: houses, townhouses (Class 1A) and units (Class 2).
- **Photoelectric**: the method the device uses to detect smoke.
- **Hardwired**: connected to the domestic dwelling’s electricity supply.
- **Interconnected**: if one smoke alarm sounds all the other smoke alarms will also sound. Interconnection can be wired or wireless.
- **Substantial**: work carried out under a building development approval or the total building works equals 50% of the dwelling over 3 years.
- **Storey**: a space within a building which is situated between one floor level and the floor level or roof above.

* Refer to specific legislation for full definitions.

For Existing Dwellings

**From 1 January 2017**

When replacing smoke alarms, they must be of a **photoelectric** type which complies with Australian Standard (AS) 3786-2014.

**Replacing smoke alarms**

Existing smoke alarms manufactured more than ten years ago must be replaced. (Note: Smoke alarms should have the date of manufacture stamped on them.)

Smoke alarms that do not operate when tested must be replaced immediately.

Existing **hardwired** smoke alarms that need replacement must be replaced with a **hardwired** smoke alarm.

**From 1 January 2027**

Smoke alarms in all **dwellings** must:

i) be **photoelectric** (AS 3786-2014); and

ii) not also contain an ionisation sensor; and

iii) be less than 10 years old; and

iv) operate when tested; and

v) be **interconnected** with every other smoke alarm in the **dwelling** so all activate together.

Smoke alarms must be installed on each **storey**:

i) in each bedroom; and

ii) in hallways which connect bedrooms and the rest of the **dwelling**; or

iii) if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the **storey**; and

iv) if there are no bedrooms on a **storey** at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the **dwelling**.

Smoke alarms must be either hardwired or powered by a non-removable 10-year battery.

Source documents

- Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990
- Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008
- Building Regulation 2006
- National Construction Code 2016
- Australian Standard (AS) 3786-2014
- Land Title Act 1994

If you have a specific question or require further clarification, please email SmokeAlarms@qfes.qld.gov.au.
NEW DWELLINGS AND DWELLINGS BEING SUBSTANTIALLY RENOVATED

From 1 January 2017

The development approval process for new dwellings and substantial renovations will ensure that building approvals received on or after this date will bring dwellings into compliance with the new laws.

Smoke alarms in the dwelling must:
   i) be photoelectric (AS 3786-2014); and
   ii) not also contain an ionisation sensor; and
   iii) be less than 10 years old; and
   iv) operate when tested; and
   v) be interconnected with every other smoke alarm in the dwelling so all activate together.

Smoke alarms must be installed on each storey:
   i) in each bedroom; and
   ii) in hallways which connect bedrooms and the rest of the dwelling; or
   iii) if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the storey; and
   iv) if there are no bedrooms on a storey at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the dwelling.

Smoke alarms must be hardwired or powered by a non-removable 10-year battery.

PRESCRIBED LOCATIONS FOR INSTALLING SMOKE ALARMS

Where practicable smoke alarms must be placed on the ceiling. Smoke alarms must not be placed:
   i) within 300mm of a corner of a ceiling and a wall;
   ii) within 300mm of a light fitting;
   iii) within 400mm of an air-conditioning vent;
   iv) within 400mm of the blades of a ceiling fan.

There are special requirements for stairways, sloping ceilings, and ceilings with exposed beams. Specific requirements will be explained in the Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008.

If impractical for the prescribed location requirements to be met (e.g. may be affected by steam from shower or fumes from cooking), the owner may put the alarm at another location that will provide a warning to occupants of the dwelling.

From 1 January 2022

Smoke alarms in the dwelling must:
   i) be photoelectric (AS 3786-2014); and
   ii) not also contain an ionisation sensor; and
   iii) be less than 10 years old; and
   iv) operate when tested; and
   v) be interconnected with every other smoke alarm in the dwelling so all activate together.

Smoke alarms must be installed on each storey:
   i) in each bedroom; and
   ii) in hallways which connect bedrooms and the rest of the dwelling; or
   iii) if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the storey; and
   iv) if there are no bedrooms on a storey at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the dwelling.

Smoke alarms must be hardwired or powered by a non-removable 10-year battery.

From 1 January 2022

Smoke alarms in the dwelling must:
   i) be photoelectric (AS 3786-2014); and
   ii) not also contain an ionisation sensor; and
   iii) be less than 10 years old; and
   iv) operate when tested; and
   v) be interconnected with every other smoke alarm in the dwelling so all activate together.

Smoke alarms must be installed on each storey:
   i) in each bedroom; and
   ii) in hallways which connect bedrooms and the rest of the dwelling; or
   iii) if there is no hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the storey; and
   iv) if there are no bedrooms on a storey at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the dwelling.

Smoke alarms must be hardwired or powered by a non-removable 10-year battery.